

ADJOURNED CITY COUNCIL MEETING / BUDGET SESSION
CITY OF WATERTOWN
May 14, 2012
6:00 P.M.

Mayor Jeffrey E. Graham Presiding

Present: **Council Member Roxanne M. Burns**
 Council Member Joseph M. Butler, Jr.
 Council Member Teresa R. Macaluso
 Council Member Jeffrey M. Smith
 Mayor Graham

Also Present: **John C. Krol, City Manager**

City staff present: Jim Mills, Ken Mix, Kurt Hauk, Elliott Nelson, Chief Herman, Erin Gardner, Peter Monaco, Chief Goss, Beth Morris, Brian Phelps, Eugene Hayes, Michael Sligar, Amy Pastuf, Peter Keenan

The City Manager presented the following reports to Council:

- Karl R. Burns Learning Center Bids
- Funding Request from Volunteer Transportation Center, Inc.
- Proposed 2012-13 Operating Fund Budget Discussion
- Work Session Schedule
- Update on Privateers

Complete Reports on file in the office of the City Clerk

DISCUSSIONS

Update on Privateers

Mr. Krol told Council that last week the Privateers were given an option for a locker room that did not interfere with any of the other users and it was inexpensive without a lot of capital outlay. He was informed today by the Privateers that this option was not acceptable. He stated the only alternatives left are to construct a new third locker room within the facility or to dedicate an existing locker room for exclusive use by the Privateers which would affect the other users.

Mayor Graham stated that Council would need further information on the cost of a new locker room and said that he is disappointed that an interim solution could not be reached for the first season.

Mr. Krol noted that all the other issues are resolved and that the only stumbling block is the locker room.

Council Member Burns thanked Mr. Krol for the update and asked if this is a stumbling block because of the associated costs for the Privateers or if there were any other factors.

Mr. Krol said that a stated requirement on their part is a dedicated locker room and clarified that the stumbling block is dependent on the solution. He indicated that building a new locker room is a cost to the City and a third locker room becomes an asset whether the Privateers stay in Watertown or not. He said this would be an expenditure of capital in a short time frame. He noted that a temporary solution is to dedicate one of the existing locker rooms but mentioned that ultimately another locker for the facility would be needed.

Council Member Butler asked how the other users would be affected if one of the existing locker rooms was dedicated to the Privateers.

Mr. Krol explained that the team would need to leave their gear in the locker room and it would be locked. He stated that his proposal was for the team to use the locker room and showers but the gear would be removed between games in order to keep it available for other users.

Council Member Burns reminded Council that Mr. Krol was just informed of this today and he needs time to work with the Parks and Recreation Superintendent and report back to Council.

Mayor Graham stated the Council's goal is to accommodate the Privateers without disrupting everything else and Council needs to look at whether the capital improvement would benefit other users.

Council Member Smith suggested if a temporary solution could be inside by the Zamboni room.

Mr. Krol indicated that this location has been looked at but it is very full with equipment. He suggested this would probably be the location of a third locker room and said that other users of the facility could use it for storage during the off season.

Mayor Graham reiterated that Mr. Krol and staff take time to look at other options in hopes of coming to common ground with the Privateers.

Updates to the Clerk's Office

Mayor Graham reviewed the memo regarding the estimate for the updates to the City Clerk's Office and Council agreed to proceed with the project.

Karl R. Burns Learning Center Bids

Kurt Hauk, City Engineer reviewed his report on the final estimate for the Learning Center. He indicated that the final estimate of approximately \$420,000 is slightly higher than what was discussed last time but the bids will determine the actual cost. As a result, he said he met with

the Parks and Recreation Department and DPW to determine if any of the work could be done in-house in case the bids come in higher. He reviewed the items that could be deducted and done by City staff if needed as well as highlighted the cabinetry work and the photovoltaic array that could be added at the discretion of the Council.

Mayor Graham reminded Council that the engineering costs for this project were paid by an appropriation for the Tourism Fund and the preliminary estimate of \$320,000 was included in the current year's budget.

Mr. Hauk stated that Mr. Wright was involved during the whole process and has not voiced any concerns. He also noted that the daily construction inspections would be done by his office so this line item should be less as well.

Council Member Smith recommended that he would not want to bond any of this since monies were appropriated this year and more money could be appropriated for the upcoming budget.

Council agreed to proceed with the bid process.

Funding Request from Volunteer Transportation Center, Inc.

Council Member Burns commented that this committee is under funded and does not have the support like other organizations do. She stated that this is a modest request and she would support it because it provides for a need that exists in the community.

Council agreed with Council Member Burns and authorized the request for \$2,200.

Work Session Schedule

A memo regarding the work session schedule for June was available for Council's review.

Flower Memorial Library Board of Trustees Memo – 2012-2013 Budget

Mayor Graham indicated that the memo reflects a budget requesting the addition of two clerks in order to have seven days a week operation. He informed Council that he and Council Member Butler met with the director, board president and a board member to discuss this.

Council Member Butler pointed out that the salary for two clerks is \$51,648 and he thought the fringe benefits of \$37,296 were high.

Mr. Krol indicated that he received the memo today and Mr. Mills has not had a chance to look at it.

Council Member Smith remarked that he fully supports the library but is not willing to support paying \$88,000 in order to have the library open one more day. He would like to know if extra hours could be obtained by reworking the hours of the current staff.

Mayor Graham said he wants to support this but suggested more information be gathered over the summer. He suggested that the new City Manager needs to be more engaged in terms of seeking out changes in the collective bargaining agreements that are specific to the library.

Council Member Smith inquired about the increase cost per staff verses the number of extra hours achieved by hiring another full-time person last year.

Council Member Butler indicated that he asked similar questions at the meeting and he was told that the library would be open 11:00am – 4:00pm or 12:00pm – 5:00pm with a staff of three people. He noted that two additional clerks would allow an additional 70 hours per week which is more than the 15 hours required for Sunday. He said that the library's argument for this was that they are under staffed and there are security issues as well that are being handled by clerks instead of security personnel.

Mayor Graham said that the level of security needed is better suited for a rental employee and inquired if this would cause a conflict under the contract.

Council Member Burns reminded Council that Mr. Krol and Mr. Mills have not had enough time to review this in order to answer all of Council's questions. She indicated that the Library Board and Council have the same goal but are struggling on how to reach this goal and suggested revisiting this topic in six months.

Mayor Graham suggested discussing this in August after they have a chance to see how the extended summer hours go but commented that he was glad to see the Library Board endorse Sunday hours.

Council Member Butler pointed out that part-time employees and volunteers are not allowed under the current contract and reiterated that there needs to be more representation in the next negotiations.

Mayor Graham agreed that negotiations have to be more than just wage rates and copays.

Council Member Butler suggested that further discussion with the Library Board be included in next week's meeting.

Council agreed to ask representatives from the library to come to the next meeting with a start time of 6:30 P.M.

Council recessed at 6:56 P.M.

Council reconvened at 7:08 P.M.

Proposed 2012-13 Operating Fund Budget Discussion

Page 48 – Law

Council Member Butler pointed that there is a 22% increase in the law budget and inquired as to the reason.

Mayor Graham noted that part of it is due to the turnover in management and the need for the attorney to assist the new manager.

Mr. Krol commented that he assumes that he is relying on Mr. Slye more than Mrs. Corriveau did because he is starting from ground zero and he suggested the new City Manager could track this on a quarterly basis.

Page 104 & 105 – Information Technology

Discussion centered on how the IT Department could move the City forward in collecting payments electronically and **Peter Keenan**, IT Manager indicated that steps have been made in the direction.

In regards to KVS, Council Member Burns stated that it is a system of the past and the City needs to come up to standards because small villages are able to accept electronic payments.

Mr. Keenan indicated that research showed that upgrades are not as expensive as originally thought and modernization is achievable at a much more approachable figure.

Mayor Graham pointed out that recreation software was purchased in 2006 but it was never used even though the City was paying \$4,500 per year in licensing fees. He noted this expense was recently eliminated but stressed it is hard for Council to rationalize things like this.. He said that it is very frustrating that payments cannot be made online.

Mr. Keenan agreed that in comparison to other entities the City is behind.

Council Member Butler stated that he wants to make sure that money is spent where it is needed in order to modernize the City with technology.

Page 111 – Police

Council Member Smith questioned the need for the Prisoner Transport Van.

Joseph Goss, Chief of Police explained that prisoner transports currently takes two hours using two officers and the use of this van would reduce multiple trips to one trip resulting in two officers' time for one hour per day. He pointed out that the van is compartmentalized allowing male and female prisoners to be transported at the same time. He also mentioned that the van could be utilized to assist the Metro Drug Task Force allowing more patrol cars to remain in service. Chief Goss indicated that this would be a limited use vehicle and not used for patrolling so it should have a shelf life of 8-10 years

Council Member Smith asked if the City officers are in charge of prisoners when they are processed at City Court.

Chief Goss explained that prisoners are the responsibility of the agency that bring them to court and the court officers are only responsible to provide the physical security of the court, judge and court staff. He noted that on average three prisoners are transported daily which results in at least two trips. He explained that this requires two officers and two cars because one car carries the prisoners and another officer is in another car to ensure safety. In addition, Chief Goss pointed out that it is not safe to bring prisoners in the side door and walk through the lobby past the public in order to get to court and suggested other options be explored.

Mr. Hauk stated that they need to speak with the new judge to see if there is more flexibility to the operation in order to put a secure elevator in the back.

Council Member Burns asked if the Metro Drug Task Force would be able to use one of sheriff's vans.

Chief Goss replied they could if it was available but said that generally if the raid is within the City then it is the City Police's responsibility.

Council Member Smith commented that this van is more cost and more maintenance for the City.

Mr. Krol commented that this would save 2 man hours per day, 6 days per week for 52 weeks a year and he estimated this could save approximately \$20,000.

Council Member Macaluso added that a van would save wear and tear on the patrol cars.

Council Member Smith asked Chief Goss to investigate transporting prisoners to the City Court in conjunction with the county.

Chief Goss responded that he will speak with the Sheriff Burns.

Page 117 - Fire

Discussion centered on the specifications of the vehicles used by the fire department in regards to their use as well as their intended use and **Dale Herman**, Fire Chief indicated that the new pickup truck would replace a 1989 Chevy pickup truck used to plow the fire station.

Council Member Smith questioned why so many trucks are needed in the Fire Department. He stated that it seems that every department has to have every toy available and wondered why the departments cannot share vehicles. He referenced the new plow truck for the bus department and stated that could be used to help plow the fire station.

Council Member Burns agreed that the City has several plow trucks and commented that the taxpayers have had to tighten their belt and the City should follow suit.

Council Member Butler said that if this was mission critical equipment he would support it but this vehicle's primary use is to remove snow.

Mayor Graham reminded Council that the new truck for the Bus Department was funded by a grant but agreed that it should be available to help assist in routine plowing in other areas.

Council concurred to delete this pickup truck from this year's budget.

Page 119 – Animal Control

Council Member Butler questioned whether there should be a dedicated employee for animal control instead of contracting with the county.

Mayor Graham reminded Council that there used to be two City employees for animal control and they operated out of the dog pound at the park. He commented that the contract with the county has expired and is in need of renegotiating but suggested that this is the better way to go.

In response to the Council Member Butler's inquiry, Mr. Mills stated that Animal Control is under Public Safety due to the NYS budget code description.

Page 134 – Department of Public Works

Council Member Butler questioned the need for an additional Portable Message Board.

Eugene Hayes, Superintendent of Department of Public Works replied that the City currently has four but could use more. He indicated that it is a tremendous safety device when performing road work and it is used in combination with the portable lighting. He added that it is also used for advertising community events and the Department of Transportation often requests to use them. He indicated that they are powered by solar rechargeable batteries.

Page 144 – Parks and Recreation

Mayor Graham stated that Council is supportive of the activities in this department and he thinks there are opportunities to enhance revenue and provide better services.

Mr. Krol mentioned that there is no budget for a vehicle but given the responsibilities of managing the geographic range of facilities, this department head should not have to use her private vehicle.

Peter Monaco, Assistant Superintendent of Department of Public Works mentioned that under state contract a compact Ford Fusion could be purchased for approximately \$17,000.

Erin Gardner, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation indicated that since the start of her employment, she has made 55 roundtrips to City Hall, the playgrounds, Thompson Park and the other facilities. She added that as summer help starts she plans to make frequent visits to the playgrounds and pools in order to supervise staff. Mrs. Gardner told Council that her goal is to be at these different areas as much as possible to prevent the problems that occurred in the past.

Council agreed to add this to the budget.

Council Member Smith remarked that the arena roof has been an ongoing problem and it needs to be replaced. He also stated that he does not want any more money spent on studies to determine if it needs to be replaced.

Mr. Krol clarified that the question is how best to replace it.

Motion was made by Council Member Roxanne M. Burns to move into Executive Session to discuss the employment history of particular individuals.

Motion was seconded by Council Member Jeffrey M. Smith and carried with all voting in favor thereof.

Council moved into Executive Session at 8:14 P.M.

Council reconvened at 9:15 P.M.

A D J O U R N M E N T

At the call of the chair, meeting was duly adjourned at 9:15 P.M. until Friday May 18, 2012 at 4:30 P.M. by motion of Council Member Roxanne M. Burns, seconded by Council Member Joseph M. Butler, Jr. and carried with all voting in favor thereof.

Ann M. Saunders
City Clerk